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All persons are by nature free and independent, and have certain natural and unalienable rights, among which are those of enjoying and defending life and liberty, of acquiring, possessing, and protecting property, and of pursuing and obtaining safety and happiness.

-- Article 1, Section 1, New Jersey State Constitution

Don't Northwoods Iran

By Jacob Hornberger

All the buzz over war with Iran brings us a déjà vu feeling, because U.S. officials used similar hype on Iraq. WMDs. An insane dictator. Et cetera.

Keep in mind that Iran, like Iraq, has never attacked us. If President Obama orders an attack on Iran, the U.S. will be the aggressor.

Aggressors like to maneuver targeted nations into firing the first shot. In that way, they can claim, "We must defend ourselves."

President Franklin Roosevelt tried that with the Germans prior to World War II. He knew that the American people were steadfastly opposed to entering into another bloody European war like World War I.

But the Germans refused to take the bait. So, FDR went in search of a "back door to war." By imposing sanctions and an oil embargo on Japan in the middle of its war on China, FDR figured that he stood a good chance of maneuvering the Japanese into retaliating.

While the debate continues over whether FDR had actual knowledge of the attack on Pearl Harbor, there is little doubt that he anticipated an attack somewhere in the Pacific. When it came he achieved his goal - U.S. entry into World War II.

As sanctions against Iran produce ever-growing suffering among the Iranian people, will the regime sit back or will it retaliate with a military strike? It's impossible to predict, but we know the U.S. response: "We must defend ourselves."

Then there is the Operation Northwoods option for war. During the Kennedy administration, the Pentagon and the CIA wanted to invade Cuba to

effect regime change there. But they didn't want to appear as the aggressor power.

So, the Joint Chiefs of Staff came up with a proposal for U.S. personnel to disguise themselves as Cuban agents and attack the U.S. base at Guantanamo Bay. It also called for terrorist attacks within the U.S.

The Pentagon expected Kennedy to lie to the American people by claiming that the Cuban government had attacked the United States.

To Kennedy's credit, he rejected Operation Northwoods. Such might not have been the case if Richard Nixon or Lyndon Johnson had been president. A few years later, Nixon would lie about the Watergate cover-up and Johnson would lie about the Gulf of Tonkin attack.

In order to provoke the North Vietnamese, the Pentagon ordered U.S. vessels to patrol in or near North Vietnamese waters. When that didn't work, the Pentagon falsely claiming that the North Vietnamese had attacked the vessels. Seizing upon the fake attack, Johnson secured the infamous Gulf of Tonkin Resolution from Congress that empowered him to launch his military invasion of Vietnam, which cost the lives of almost 60,000 Americans, who died for nothing.

If President Obama (or his successor) does decide to go to war with Iran, he should be required, on pain of impeachment, to follow the law that we the people have imposed upon him with our Constitution. He should be made to secure a declaration of war from Congress. At least in that way, Congress could ferret out whether the president, the Pentagon or the CIA have employed a Pearl Harbor, Operation Northwoods, or Gulf of Tonkin scheme to justify their war.

-- 25 February 12. *Jacob Hornberger is founder and president of the Future of Freedom Foundation*

Jeff Booth, former New Jersey Militia Newsletter editor, dies at 65

Jeff Booth, co-founder of the *New Jersey Militia Newsletter*, and co-editor from 1995-1999, died February 4 at his home in Vermont while recovering from quadruple bypass surgery.

Jeff was a quiet man, a patriot - a lover of the Constitution, the Bill of Rights and the power of the jury to nullify bad law. He was also a religious man who taught himself Hebrew. Once he used his knowledge of Hebrew to convert an Israeli working in New Jersey who, when he returned to Israel, founded a Christian mission there. He later wrote a book in which he credited Jeff Booth.

Jeff also was a founder of African Americans for the Preservation of Firearms Ownership.

At his memorial service Pastor Caroline Bennett said as a sixteen year old Jeff would bring friends to the McLaughlin Pentecostal Church in Long Branch. Sometimes the boys came barefoot and the pastor would have to ask them to dress up. Jeff was a faithful church goer there until 2010 when he retired and moved away. As perhaps the only white man in the congregation, Pastor Bennett said sometimes eyebrows were raised when he was asked to take up the collection.

Jeff was drafted into the Army and went to Vietnam as a truck driver supplying troops out of the logistical base at Long Binh. He remembered the heat and the dust, and scraping the sweat and dirt off his face

with his ID card. One night when the Viet Cong blew up the ammunition dump, unexploded artillery shells rained down on Jeff's barracks. While another soldier cried and hid under a bunk Jeff quietly got his rifle and prepared for whatever was to come.

At 48 Jeff married. His wife Eileen said, "He was the love of my life." They moved to Vermont in search of freedom.

U.S. Military Program Arming Local Police Expands

Billions of taxpayer dollars are being used by the Department of Defense to provide military-grade weaponry to local law-enforcement departments. Even small-town police forces are building up arsenals that include amphibious tanks, helicopters, armored personnel carriers, robots, grenade launchers, and more. According to Pentagon data cited by *The Daily*, DoD gave away almost \$500 million worth of surplus military equipment to state and local law enforcement in 2011 — a new record.

Meanwhile, violent crime has plummeted to 40-year lows. Since the 1033 program was authorized in 1997, more than \$2.5 billion of gear has been distributed to over 17,000 local and state agencies.

"The trend toward militarization was well under way before 9/11," Tim Lynch, director of the Cato Institute's project on criminal justice, told *The Daily*. "But it's the federal policy of making surplus military equipment available almost for free that has poured fuel on this fire."

Lynch said the militarization of local law enforcement has had a "corrupting influence" on policing culture in America, creating "paramilitary" units all across the nation. "They say, 'look we've got this equipment, this training and we haven't been using it.' That's where it starts to creep into routine policing," he added.

The Daily interviewed several current and former law-enforcement chiefs for the story. Some support the idea. For others, however, it is a sinister and troubling trend.

"The profile of these military police units invading a neighborhood like the occupation army is contrary to what you want to do as a police department," explained former Kansas City, MO, police chief Joseph McNamara.

"We have a lot of evidence on how to prevent crime and the major component is to win support for police,

that we're not this aloof occupation army."

On Dec. 3 the *New York Times* also examined militarization of law-enforcement, noting that the roles of law enforcement and the military are completely different. Taxpayers hire police officers to protect and serve their local communities. They hire soldiers to smash, kill, and destroy an enemy.

"Yet lately images from Occupy protests streamed on the Internet show just how readily police officers can adopt military-style tactics and equipment, and come off more like soldiers as they face down citizens," noted the *Times*. "Some say this adds up to the emergence of a new, more militaristic breed of civilian police officer."

Analysts say Americans' tax dollars are unconstitutionally routed through D.C. only to be returned as "grants" with strings attached, often to fight various "wars" — terror and drugs most prominent among them.

"The problem is, if you have those kinds of specialized units, that you hunt for appropriate settings to use them and, in some of the smaller police departments, notions of the appropriate settings to use them are questionable," said University of California law Professor Franklin Zimring.

A 2006 study by the Cato Institute called "Overkill: The Rise of Paramilitary Police Raids in America" examined the ever-increasing number of military-style raids across the country — around 50,000 per year according to some estimates.

"The raids have resulted in dozens of needless deaths and injuries, not only of drug offenders, but also of police officers, children, bystanders, and innocent suspects," the paper explained.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Senate just voted for a bill that purports to make America into a "battlefield" as part of the global terror war. American citizens deemed to represent a "threat" to the "Homeland" could be picked up by the military and detained indefinitely — no charges, no jury, no trial.

-- <http://thenewamerican.com> Dec. 7, 2011

How the FBI Invents Terrorists

By Mansfield Frazier

If federal authorities thought Amine El Khalifi was a clear and present danger to America, they could have easily solved the problem by deporting the 29-year-old Moroccan, who had been living as an illegal

immigrant in northern Virginia for years, having overstayed his visitor's visa by a decade. Instead, he was arrested Friday outside the U.S. Capitol for allegedly planning to set off a fake suicide vest and shoot people with an inoperable automatic weapon - both provided to him by his government handlers.

In February Trevor Aaronson won an award from John Jay College of Criminal Justice for "The Informants," an article he wrote in the September-October 2011 issue of *Mother Jones*.

In retrospect, Aaronson's article was prescient. Down to the minutest of details, he described just how alleged "plots" like the one Khalifi is accused of launching unfold. They usually follow a similar pattern: an FBI-paid informant goes to his handlers and alerts them to threats being made against America by a fellow worshiper at the mosque they attend; the feds then continue to pay the informant so they can develop a relationship with the supposed terrorist, thereby encouraging the sometimes unstable individual to think of himself as a potential martyr and avenger of all of the Western insults against Islam; then, when the "terrorist" is wound up tighter than a cheap wristwatch, he is given "weapons of mass destruction" and sent off to avenge his faith.

Of course the feds, who have orchestrated, choreographed, and paid for the entire charade, are waiting for the bomber with open arms.

Some legal scholars, like Karen Greenberg, who studies terrorism sting operations at Fordham Law School, caution against entrapment in such cases. "You want to be very sure that the narrative is not substantially provided by the government. There's a lot of gray area in these cases." Other legal experts say that the FBI sometimes crosses the fine line between "discovering" a plot and creating one by suborning and provoking individuals who, while perhaps willing to commit an act of violence after many months of coaching, cajoling, and encouraging by paid informants, really don't have the means to carry out their wild jihadist fantasies absent U.S. government assistance.

Aaronson wrote: "Ever since 9/11, counterterrorism has been the FBI's No. 1 priority, consuming the lion's share of its budget - \$3.3 billion, compared to \$2.6 billion for organized crime....The bureau now maintains a roster of 15,000 spies - many of them tasked ... with infiltrating Muslim

communities in the United States. In addition, for every informant officially listed in the bureau's records, there are as many as three unofficial ones ... the informants could be doctors, clerks, imams. Some might not even consider themselves informants....In case after case, the government provides the plot, the means, and the opportunity."

But Muslims are not the only focuses of FBI interest. Last week nine members of the Hutaree, a Michigan-based militia made up of white native-born Americans, went on trial in U.S. district court in Detroit. Again, an informant infiltrated and wiretapped the group, whose members are charged with seditious conspiracy, attempts to use weapons of mass destruction, teaching or demonstrating the use of explosive materials, and carrying, using, and possessing a firearm with the intention to use for violence. The indictment states the group was planning to "levy war against the United States."

'In case after case, the government provides the plot, the means, and the opportunity.'

But defense attorneys say the militia's antigovernment talk is protected under the First Amendment and amounts to little more than bragging and boasting and that their actions were not illegal. They described the group as a bunch of gun and hunting enthusiasts. "Calling this group a militia is pushing it," attorney Todd Shanker said. Another attorney said his client "was exercising his God-given right to blow off steam and open his mouth." Dan Murray, the paid informant, was paid \$30,000 for his services. Some critics claim that in tough economic times this amount is more than enough to entice informants to add a little yeast to their stories to make them rise and stick better. Murray, who was convicted in state court of firing shots at his wife during a domestic disturbance, received probation, with all charges dropped after he pleaded guilty. The favorable treatment for a paid snitch is due to the intervention of federal authorities, defense lawyers claim.

Cleveland defense lawyer Ken Lumpkin says, "In these terrorist cases there's a sneaking suspicion the feds are using informants that are unreliable at best or highly manipulative liars at worse. Often they only introduce tapes that support their version of the facts. If a target of an investigation tries to back out of a plot and has to be

convinced over and over again to stay in ... that tape will never be played for the jury. We have to be careful we don't create a country - a society - where everyone is afraid that everyone else may be, in some way, working for the government. That can destroy trust and destabilize communities, something some folks, based on history, think the FBI is not above doing. That's one of the hallmarks of totalitarianism ... when Big Brother gets too all-powerful and uses informants to set us against each other."

-- The Daily Beast, 20 Feb 12

Police, No Duty to Protect

Ruth Brunell called the police on 20 different occasions to plead for protection from her husband. One evening Mr. Brunell telephoned his wife and told her he was coming over to kill her. When she called the police, they told her to call back when he got there. Mr. Brunell stabbed his wife to death before she could call the police to tell them that he was there. The court held that the San Jose police were not liable for ignoring Mrs. Brunell's pleas for help. **Hartzler v. City of San Jose, 46 Cal. App. 3d 6 (1st Dist. 1975).**

Linda Riss telephoned the NYC police and begged for help because her ex-boyfriend had repeatedly threatened "If I can't have you no one else will have you, and when I get through with you, no-one else will want you." The day after she had pleaded for police protection, the ex-boyfriend threw lye in her face, blinding her in one eye, severely damaging the other, and permanently scarring her features. "What makes the City's position particularly difficult to understand," wrote a dissenting opinion in her tort suit against the City, "is that, in conformity to the dictates of the law, Linda did not carry any weapon for self-defense. Thus, by a rather bitter irony she was required to rely for protection on the City of New York which now denies all responsibility to her." **Riss v. New York, 240 N.E.2d 860 (N.Y. 1968).** [Note: Linda Riss obeyed the gun control law, which prevented her from arming herself in self-defense.]

The seminal case establishing the general rule that police have no duty under federal law to protect citizens is **DeShaney v. Winnebago County Department of Social Services (109 S.Ct. 998, 1989).** Frequently these cases are based on an alleged "special relationship"

between the injured party and the police. In DeShaney the injured party was a boy who was beaten and permanently injured by his father. He claimed a special relationship existed because local officials knew he was being abused, indeed they had "specifically proclaimed by word and deed [their] intention to protect him against that danger," but failed to remove him from his father's custody. ("Domestic Violence — When Do Police Have a Constitutional Duty to Protect?" Special Agent Daniel L. Schofield, S.J.D., FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin, January, 1991.) The Court in DeShaney held that no duty arose because of a "special relationship," concluding that Constitutional duties of care and protection only exist as to certain individuals, such as incarcerated prisoners, involuntarily committed mental patients and others restrained against their will and therefore unable to protect themselves. "The affirmative duty to protect arises not from the State's knowledge of the individual's predicament or from its expressions of intent to help him, but from the limitation which it has imposed on his freedom to act on his own behalf." (**DeShaney v. Winnebago County Department of Social Services, 109 S.Ct. 998 (1989) at 1006.**)

In other words the only people the police are duty-bound to protect are criminals in custody, and other persons in custody for such things as mental disorders. YOU have no recourse if the police fail to respond or fail to protect you from injury!

Concealed carry, It's an individual right

--
concealed.wordpress.com/2007/12/12

DNA Sampling from Motorists - The Latest Threat to Privacy

Drivers face all kinds of threats to their privacy, including the collection of DNA samples during traffic stops.

In the California case of *People v. Thomas*, Troy Thomas, a suspect in a string of burglaries, was stopped under the guise of a DUI check. Thomas submitted to a breathalyzer test, which he passed. However, Thomas' DNA from the breathalyzer mouthpiece was submitted for testing, without his knowledge or consent.

At trial, Thomas moved to have the DNA evidence suppressed

In the beginning of change the patriot is a scarce man, brave, hated and scorned. When his cause succeeds, however, the timid join him, for then it costs nothing to be a patriot. — Mark Twain

because it was seized and tested without a search warrant. The court denied the motion saying that Thomas did not have an expectation of privacy since he abandoned the evidence. It ruled that the sample was voluntarily given, and testing was not a search within the meaning of the Fourth Amendment.

About half the states and the federal government have laws allowing DNA collection upon arrest for certain offenses. Some states collect DNA for all felony arrests while others only do so for arrests for serious or violent felonies. The DNA data ends up in a national database where it is ostensibly available to help solve crimes.

Civil rights groups object to such practices saying they violate Fourth Amendment protections against "unreasonable searches and seizures." But supporters argue that DNA extraction is no different than lifting a fingerprint: an accepted routine even for those not convicted of a crime.

This specious argument is reminiscent of another case last year in which the California Supreme Court allowed evidence from a cell phone seized without a warrant. The court likened the cell phone to a piece of clothing or a pack of cigarettes and not subject to Fourth Amendment protections. But cell-phone data tells much more about a person than if they smoke menthols or regulars.

Likewise, DNA reveals so much more about a person than just their identity. Their appearance, ancestry, propensity for disease, addictive tendencies, character traits—all accessible for who knows what purposes. A technique called familial searching can match unidentified DNA samples to existing samples in order to establish familial relationships.

As with other motorists' rights we are on the proverbial slippery slope again. First, we were assured that DNA would only be taken from those convicted of serious crimes. Next, it would only be taken from those arrested for serious crimes. Now, DNA can be taken from targeted motorists without their knowledge or consent.

According to legal experts, motorists have lost their expectations of privacy on many fronts. Motorists need to be knowledgeable and assertive in order to stop further encroachment on their constitutional right to privacy. Otherwise, it's not hard to envision mandatory DNA sampling as part of routine traffic stops

-- National Motorists Assn., NMA E-Newsletter #163, Feb. 19, 2012

For the "Only police should have guns" file

Los Angeles (CNN) -- A dispute between federal immigration agents left one of them dead on Friday.

Federal officials said the [shooting] occurred during a counseling session regarding performance.

-- CNN Wire Staff, February 17, 2012

Famous people opposing the right to keep and bear arms

Major John Pitcairn, commander of Advance Guard of British forces marching to Concord MA: "Disperse you rebels; damn you, throw down your arms and disperse." (Order to American militiamen at Lexington, April 19, 1775)

President Bill Clinton: "We've banned these guns ['assault' weapons] because you don't need an Uzi to go deer hunting, and everyone knows it." Weekly radio address, 15 Nov 97, the Roosevelt Room, the White House

Major Owens, Congressman, D-NY: "The second article of amendment (Second Amendment) to the Constitution of the United States is repealed." (U.S. House Joint Resolution 438 introduced 11 March 1992)

Charles Krauthammer, syndicated columnist: "Ultimately, a civilized society must disarm its citizenry if it is to have a modicum of domestic tranquility... Passing a law like the assault weapons ban is a symbolic — purely symbolic move in that direction. Its only real justification is not to reduce crime but to desensitize the public to the regulation of weapons in preparation for their ultimate confiscation..." *Washington Post*, 5 April 1996

William Greider, *Rolling Stone* magazine: "Thus the limited scope of the Brady bill was justified as a necessary first step toward breaking the NRA's power — a way to demonstrate that politicians could support a moderate version of control and survive." (*Rolling Stone*: "A Pistol-whipped Nation — Pass the Brady Bill — then ban handguns", 30 Sep 93)

Dr. Joyce Brothers, psychiatrist and TV personality: "Men possess handguns in order to compensate for sexual dysfunction." [Her husband is among NYC elite that has been issued a permit to carry a concealed handgun.]

Sylvester Stallone, actor: "The only way to make America safe: go house to house and confiscate

every gun." (Access Hollywood, 8 June 98)

Nazi German Minister of the Interior: "Those now possessing weapons and ammunition are at once to turn them over to the local police authority. Firearms and ammunition found in a Jew's possession will be forfeited to the government without compensation. Whoever willfully or negligently violates the provisions will be punished with imprisonment and a fine." (Regulations Against Jews' Possession of Weapons, 11 Nov 1938)

The Enemy Expatriation Act

Dear NJM,

I have just become aware of the bill, HR-3166, the Enemy Expatriation Act. And also how the re-authorization of the Patriot Act was expanded through the VIPER program, and erecting highway checkpoints by the TSA. I am looking forward to your response to these items.

Sincerely,

FFF

Ocean County

Ed.: According to the Congressional Research Service the Enemy Expatriation Act was introduced Oct. 12, 2011; it amends the Immigration and Nationality Act [8 U.S.C. 1483(a)] to include engaging in or purposefully and materially supporting hostilities against the United States to the list of acts for which U.S. nationals would lose their nationality. Defines "hostilities" as any conflict subject to the laws of war.

The bill has been submitted to the House Judiciary Committee and to the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration Policy and Enforcement.

Ed.: the bill apparently deals with naturalized citizens as opposed to native born citizens, and would presumably deport violators. Of course it would be a simple matter to extend punishment to native born offenders like the Hutaree militia (see "How the FBI Invents Terrorists") who could be stripped of citizenship and confined for life within the U.S. or its territories.

* * *
From the L.A. *Times*, Dec. 20, 2011:

"The Transportation Security Administration isn't just in airports anymore. TSA teams are increasingly conducting searches and screenings at train stations, subways, ferry terminals and other mass transit locations around the country....

"The TSA's 25 "viper" teams — for Visible Intermodal

Prevention and Response — have run more than 9,300 unannounced checkpoints and other search operations in the last year. Department of Homeland Security officials have asked Congress for funding to add 12 more teams next year.

"According to budget documents, the department spent \$110 million in fiscal 2011 for "surface transportation security," including the TSA's viper program, and is asking for an additional \$24 million next year."

Ed.: we don't know if VIPER was authorized by the Patriot Act. In any case, both are manifestations of the same fruitless police state mentality.

ACLU Represents Philadelphia Gun Owner

We previously discussed the abusive arrest of Mark Fiorino by Philadelphia police. Now the American Civil Liberties Union has filed a federal complaint against the city of Philadelphia.

The audio recording (below) shows Fiorino, 25, being confronted by a Philadelphia police officer about carrying a gun in public. Fiorino is allowed to open carry in the city, but the officers appear completely ignorant of their own directives and became increasingly hostile to Fiorino's effort to show them that he was lawfully carrying the weapon.

The encounter occurred on February 13, 2011, nearly five months after a policy allowing such carrying of a weapon was implemented. Fiorino was stopped by an officer pointing a gun at his chest and yelling "Yo, junior, what are you doing?" Sgt. Michael Dougherty would not listen to Fiorino's explanation and ordered him to get on his knees or else "I am gonna shoot ya." Other officers then arrived and continued to heap abuse on Fiorino after he was handcuffed and put face down on the sidewalk. He was later released without charges, but there is no report of disciplining the officers involved. Only after Fiorino said that he was considering a lawsuit and his tape was placed on YouTube, did Commissioner Charles Ramsey order an investigation. (For the record, Ramsey is a defendant in the World Bank case in which I am one of the lead counsels suing the District of Columbia and federal government for a mass arrest of citizens without legal cause or due process). After investigating, the department decided to crack down on Fiorino rather than the officers. He was charged with

disorderly conduct and recklessly endangering another person. Five officers were sent to his workplace to arrest him. He later surrendered and was charged. However, the police then arrested him again a week later -- saying that the warrant had not been changed in the system. He was eventually cleared of all charges on October 27, 2011 after spending time in jail and having to get a lawyer. Despite the clear absurdity of the charge that he was disorderly or that he endangered others, there was no effort to hold either the police or the prosecutors involved to any form of discipline.

That is why this lawsuit is so important. For those on the right who criticize the ACLU, the case is also a reminder of the work that this organization does for all citizens regardless of their politics or views. He is being represented by McCausland Keen & Buckman and the ACLU of Pennsylvania. The case is *Fiorino v. City of Philadelphia, et al.*

-- <http://jonathanturley.org/2012/02/12>

Another media hypocrite hires armed bodyguard

The recent revelation that the head of Media Matters, David Brock, walked the streets of Washington with a Glock-toting bodyguard may make it a little awkward for the group the next time it seeks a donation from a gun control advocacy group.

Media Matters reportedly took more than \$400,000 from the Joyce Foundation to promote "gun and public safety issues."

"It doesn't look good," said Fraser Seitel, president of Emerald Partners Communications, a public relations firm. "Since (Media Matters) is so anti-NRA, to have their members packing heat leaves them open to criticism," he said.

Media Matters proudly claims to be engaged in an information war to bring down Fox News, and has been exposed as a distributor of liberal talking points that regularly find their way into mainstream media outlets, according to The Daily Caller.

Officials at the Chicago-based Joyce Foundation did not return repeated calls for comment. The nonprofit doles out donations to a variety of groups to address such issues as urban public education, job training, the environment, and gun violence.

-- FoxNews.com Feb. 12, 2012

How Ayn Rand Became the New Right's Version of Marx

It has a fair claim to be the ugliest philosophy of the postwar world. Selfishness, it contends, is good, altruism evil, empathy and compassion are irrational and destructive. The poor deserve to die; the rich deserve unmediated power. The belief system constructed by Ayn Rand, who died 30 years ago today, has never been more influential.

Rand immigrated to the U.S. from Russia. Through her novels (such as *Atlas Shrugged*) and her nonfiction (such as *The Virtue of Selfishness*) she explained a philosophy she called Objectivism. This holds that the only moral course is pure self-interest. We owe nothing, she insists, to anyone, even to members of our own families. She described the poor and weak as "refuse" and "parasites", and excoriated anyone seeking to assist them. Apart from the police, the courts and the armed forces, there should be no role for government: no social security, no public health or education, no public infrastructure or transport, no fire service, no regulations, no income tax.

Atlas Shrugged, published in 1957, depicts a U.S. crippled by government intervention in which heroic millionaires struggle against a nation of spongers. The millionaires, whom she portrays as Atlas holding the world aloft, withdraw their labour, with the result that the nation collapses. It is rescued, through unregulated greed and selfishness, by one of the heroic plutocrats, John Galt.

The poor die like flies as a result of government programmes and their own sloth and fecklessness. In a notorious passage, she argues that all the passengers in a train filled with poisoned fumes deserved their fate. One, for instance, was a teacher who taught children to be team players; one was a housewife "who believed that she had the right to elect politicians, of whom she knew nothing".

Rand's is the philosophy of the psychopath, a misanthropic fantasy of cruelty, revenge and greed. Yet, as Gary Weiss shows in his new book, *Ayn Rand Nation*, she has become to the new right what Karl Marx once was to the left: a demigod at the head of a chiliastic cult. Almost one third of Americans, according to a recent poll, have read *Atlas Shrugged*, and it now sells hundreds of thousands of copies every year.

Ignoring Rand's evangelical atheism, the Tea Party movement has

taken her to its heart. No rally of theirs is complete without placards reading "Who is John Galt?" and "Rand was right". Rand, Weiss argues, provides the unifying ideology which has "distilled vague anger and unhappiness into a sense of purpose".

Objectivism, I believe, is making itself felt on this side of the Atlantic: in the clamorous new demands to remove the 50p tax band for the very rich, for instance; or among the sneering, jeering bloggers who write for the *Telegraph*, mocking compassion and empathy, attacking efforts to make the word a kinder place.

It is not hard to see why Rand appeals to billionaires. She offers them something that is crucial to every successful political movement: a sense of victimhood. She tells them that they are parasitised by the ungrateful poor and oppressed by intrusive, controlling governments.

It is harder to see what it gives the ordinary teabaggers, who would suffer grievously from a withdrawal of government. But such is the degree of misinformation which saturates this movement and so prevalent in the U.S. is Willy Loman syndrome (the gulf between reality and expectations) that millions blithely volunteer themselves as billionaires' doormats. I wonder how many would continue to worship at the shrine of Ayn Rand if they knew that she signed on for both Medicare and social security. She had railed furiously against both programmes, as they represented everything she despised about the intrusive state. Her belief system was no match for the realities of age and ill health. -- George Monbiot, *Guardian UK*, 6 Mar 12

The Heat Wave Weapon: "You're gonna feel it"

In the 'War of the Worlds' the Martians used them to incinerate pesky humans.

The Pentagon plans are more modest: crowd control of pesky humans.

The 'heat ray' has made the leap from fiction to reality with so-called 'goodbye effect' of directing electromagnetic waves at people.

It delivers sudden, unbearable heat, like the wave when a hot oven door is opened but far more powerful - an intense, enveloping but non-lethal blast.

"You're not gonna see it, you're not gonna hear it, you're not gonna smell it: you're gonna feel it," said Colonel Tracy Taffola, at the unveiling of the quaintly-dubbed Active Denial System at the U.S. Marines base near Quantico. From a kilometre away, the high-energy, beam, concentrated by a big concave mirror mounted atop a military vehicle can blast a crowd. Instantly, everyone wants to flee. Hence the "goodbye effect."

The Pentagon has been experimenting with killer beams for decades. A laser so powerful that it can destroy nuclear-tipped missiles shortly after launch has been mounted in a much-modified Boeing 747 and is being tested.

The heat ray on display this week is at the other end of the spectrum. It's the "safest non-lethal capability" developed to date, Col. Taffola said.

Versions of the heat ray have been tested for years. One was sent to Afghanistan - but never used - in 2010. Police departments have shown interest.

The demonstration was intended to allay fears about the heat ray. In thousands of tests on more than 700 volunteers, using varying power levels, only two injuries requiring hospital treatment have occurred, according to officials.

The "active denial system" is of a frequency that is absorbed at the surface of the skin. So there's an unbearable feeling of intense heat but no real danger.

No one discussed whether a little meddling with the frequencies could fry crowds rather than disperse them. Opponents of heat rays have already questioned whether those incapable of instant flight - the aged, infirm, pregnant - might suffer serious injury from prolonged exposure. Others have suggested that mass panic among those exposed to the unseen beam could result in trampling and mayhem. Proponents claim the heat ray is safer,

poses less risk and is more humane than other non-lethal means of crowd dispersal such as tear gas or pepper sprays.

-- *Globe and Mail*, 15 Mar 12

Undocumented immigrants honored in California Assembly

Five undocumented immigrants received a standing ovation on the Assembly floor on Monday for their campaign to prod changes in federal immigration law.

The immigrants are walking from San Francisco to Washington, D.C., to lobby for the federal Dream Act, which would provide a pathway to citizenship for longtime residents who immigrated illegally and later graduated from U.S. high schools.

No lawmakers protested Monday's recognition - almost all Democrats stood to applaud, but many Republicans stayed in their seats

"These are young people exemplifying true leadership and commitment to civic engagement," said Assemblyman Ricardo Lara, a Bell Gardens Democrat who chairs the Latino Legislative Caucus

-- www.fresnobee.com/2012/03/20/2

The Politically Incorrect Guide to Socialism, by Kevin D.

Williamson

Socialists believe they have the moral high ground -- that material equality is more important than liberty, and some personal freedoms must be done away with in order to achieve financial leveling. It is better to have an intrusive, controlling, even violent government impose material equality on the citizenry than to deal with income disparities, say socialists. In fact, it is imperative that socialist governments end income inequalities, and that is where the famines, death squads and labor camps come in.

-- From a book review by M. Heiss posted on Amazon.com Jan 15, 2012

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